

**Dialogue of Executive Secretaries of Regional Commissions
with Second Committee of the General Assembly**
4 October 2011, New York

Presentation by Dr. Noeleen Heyzer, Executive Secretary, ESCAP

TITLE: Integrating the Economic, Social and Environmental Pillars of Sustainable Development in Asia and the Pacific

ABSTRACT: Prior to the global economic crisis of 2008, the Asia-Pacific region was able to achieve high economic growth, which significantly reduced poverty. Although the region has been quick to recover from the crisis and has emerged as the new growth centre of the world, its ability to maintain the dynamism of future growth is under threat. The prospect of a new global recession, recent setbacks in poverty reduction and achievement of the MDGs, widening social justice gaps, and mounting environmental pressures are the key challenges of sustainable development for Member States of the region.

Rising up to these challenges calls for a closer integration of the three pillars of sustainable development. The region has to sustain its growth momentum to be able to eradicate poverty and achieve social justice for all in harmony with the environment. Policy changes are needed to raise household consumption, reduce inequality and ease the pressures on natural resources through higher efficiency in production and consumption. Leading economies of the region have launched several initiatives in this direction, while the poorer countries require technical and financial assistance to follow in their footsteps. Regional Commissions offer a comprehensive multisectoral platform to assist Member States.